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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/687,502

10/15/2003

Cropper S. Michael

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03/02/2009

PHILIP S. JOHNSON

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08933-7003

EXAMINER

ANDERSON, MICHAEL J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3767

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/02/2009

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/687,502	Applicant(s) MICHAEL ET AL.	
	Examiner MICHAEL J. ANDERSON	Art Unit 3767	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 December 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 25-40 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 25-40 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 12/11/2008 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 27 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 27 recites the limitation " said elastomeric seal " in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 28 recites the limitation " said layered elastomeric members " in lines 1-2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 25-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Haber (US Patent No. 5,385,552).

With regards to new claims 25, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) a surgical access device (2), comprising a seal assembly (122, 124 and 136) having a plurality of separate semicircular seal segments arranged in a conical shape, each seal segment having a circumference greater than 180 degrees and being adapted to seal against objects positioned through the seal.

With regards to new claims 26, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the surgical access device of claim 25 wherein said seal assembly has an outer perimeter which is attached to a flotation means (134).

With regards to new claims 27, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the surgical access device of claim 25 wherein said seal assembly includes a plurality of protectors (46, 98) disposed proximal to said elastomeric seal.

With regards to new claims 28, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the surgical access device of claim 25 wherein said layered elastomeric members are disposed such that there is a substantially centrally located aperture in said seal assembly.

With regards to new claims 29, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the surgical access device of claim 25, further comprising a cannula (14).

With regards to new claims 30, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) a trocar for performing a procedure on a patient, said trocar comprising: a. a hollow cannula (14) having a distal end and a proximal end; b. a housing (58) having a distal end attached to said proximal end of said cannula and a proximal end having a wall (58) attached thereto, said wall having an aperture (64) therethrough; c. a seal assembly disposed within said housing comprising a first substantially rigid ring (132), a second substantially rigid ring (134), and a plurality of semicircular elastomeric members (122, 124) compressed therebetween and forming a conical shape, the elastomeric members circumscribing an aperture in an interwoven pattern and cooperate to sufficiently seal against objects positioned within the aperture to maintain gas pressure in the abdominal cavity during endoscopic surgical procedures.

With regards to new claims 31, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the trocar according to claim 30 wherein said elastomeric members comprise a proximal flange portion, and an inwardly extending portion extending distally therefrom, wherein said proximal flange portions are disposed between and are abutting against said rings (figure 2).

With regards to new claims 32, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the trocar according to claim 30 wherein said plurality of elastomeric layers are interwoven.

With regards to new claims 33, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the trocar according to claim 30 wherein said plurality of elastomeric members have a non-planar shape prior to be assembled together.

With regards to new claims 34, Haber discloses (as for claims 25-33 above, figures 2 and 5A) a trocar for performing a procedure on a patient, said trocar comprising: a. a hollow cannula having a distal end and a proximal end; b. a housing having a distal end attached to said proximal end of said cannula and a proximal end having a wall attached thereto, said wall having an aperture therethrough; c. an instrument seal assembly disposed within said housing comprising a plurality layered elastomeric members arranged circumferentially about an aperture in an alternating over and under pattern and forming a conical shape, the plurality layered elastomeric members cooperating to provide a substantially gas-tight seal against instruments positioned through the aperture.

With regards to new claims 35, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the seal of claim 34, wherein the elastomeric members are semicircular.

With regards to new claims 36, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the seal of claim 35, wherein the elastomeric members have a circumference between 180 to 270 degrees.

With regards to new claims 37, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the seal of claim 34, wherein the instrument seal assembly further provides zero- closure (136).

With regards to new claims 38, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the seal of claim 34, wherein the elastomeric members are arranged in non- planar shape.

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With regards to new claims 39, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the seal of claim 34, wherein the instrument seal assembly comprises four elastomeric members (124 a-d).

With regards to new claims 40, Haber discloses (figures 2 and 5A) the seal of claim 34, further comprising a first substantially rigid ring and a second substantially rigid ring, the elastomeric members being compressed therebetween.

Response to Amendment

The present communication responds to the Amendment of 12/11/2008. By these communications, claims 30 and 34 were amended. The amendments did not add new matter. Claims 25-40 are pending. The rejection(s) are as stated.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 12/11/2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that " The proximal seal (122) would be referred to in the art as a "zero-closure seal". However, Applicant specification (figure 7, pp [0022], last line) suggest otherwise.

With regards to claim 25-40, Haber does not teach away by disclosing conical shaped "seal" segments (124 and 136). The "seals" (124) form a cone shape when stacked and "seal" (136) is cone shaped to anticipate the claim 25 as presently claimed. Furthermore, the seals have a non-planer shape since they have flanges (figure 2).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHAEL J. ANDERSON whose telephone number is (571)272-2764. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin C. Sirmons can be reached on (571) 272-4965. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Michael J Anderson/
Examiner
Art Unit 3767

MJA
2/25/2009
/Kevin C. Sirmons/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3767

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